A Tale Of Two Kittens

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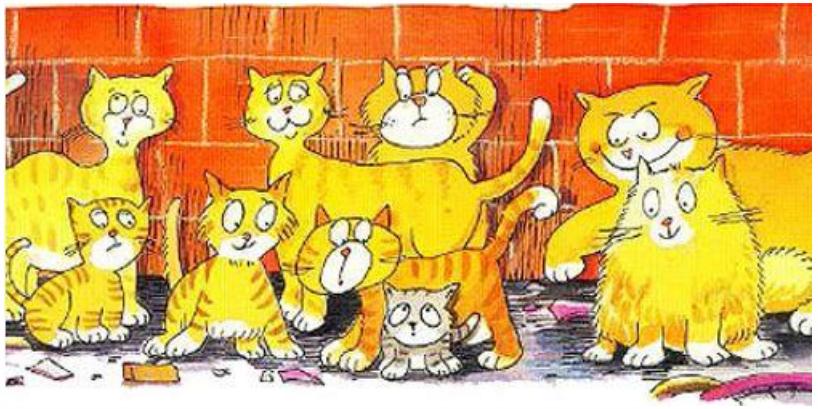
Illustrated by Adeel-uz-Zafar



That night there was a terrible storm.

A storm so terrible that trees bent and quivered, buildings shook and shivered and the wicked wind whirled around the town, picking up anything in its way.

"What's this?" whistled the wind as it spun towards a ginger kitten, snatching her up and tossing her high in the air.

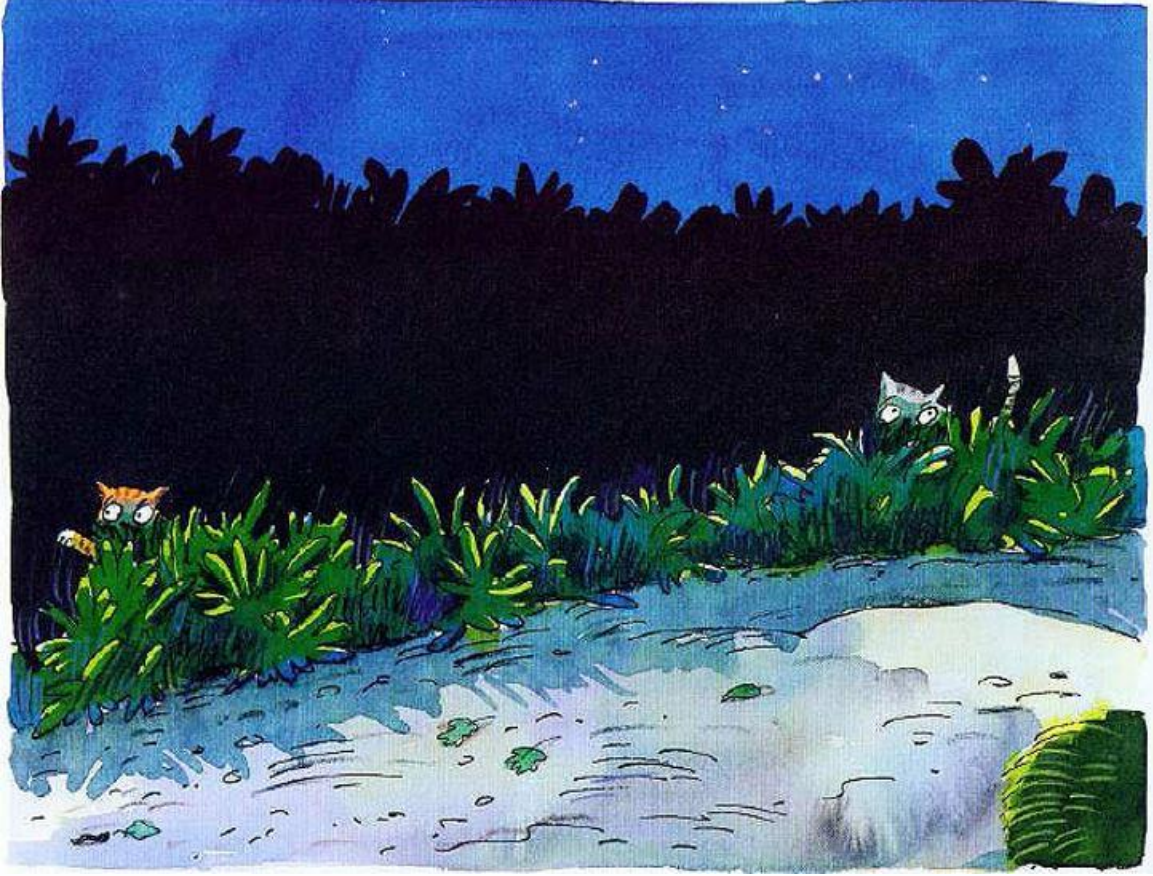
"More fun!" roared the wind as it chased after a grey kitten, snapping at his heels and palling his tail. By the time the wind grew weary of the game, both kittens had been blown far from home.

"I’m so lost," sobbed one kitten as it licked an injured paw.

"I'm so scared," wept the other. "It’s dark and I can't find my way home."

But, in the distance sounds could be heard. "Miaow!" The ginger kitten turned her ears towards the east.

"Miaow!" The grey kitten turned his ears to the west. They each followed the sound of the miaows, until they were found.



"Thank goodness!" cried the ginger kitten in delight, as she felt the warmth

of cats as they rubbed against her and led her to safety.

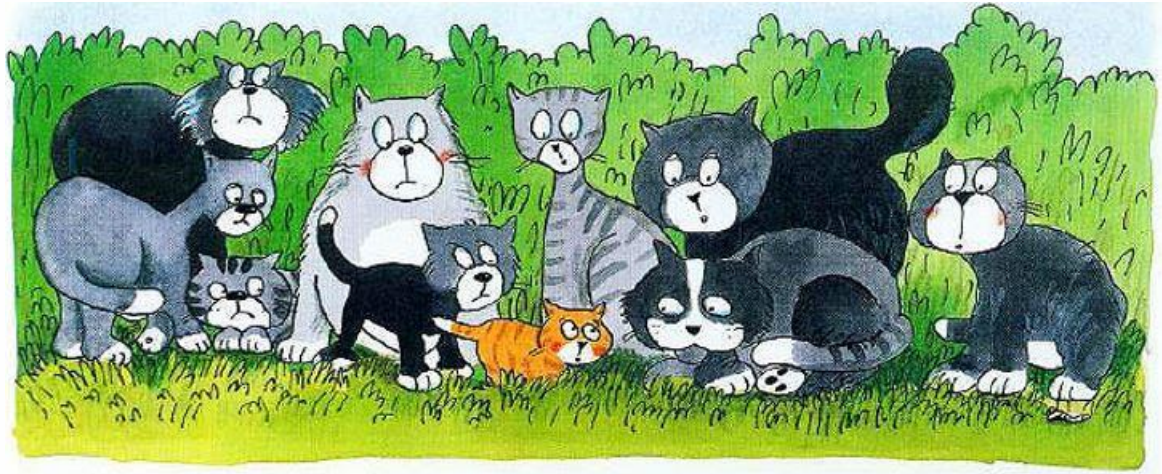
"I have been rescued!" said the grey kitten as he was licked from ear to

paw in welcome.

Both kittens slept easily that night, soothed by familiar smells and purrs.

But... when the new day dawned.

“Look!" cried a grey cat in alarm when he woke up and saw the ginger kitten. The other cats looked, rubbed their eyes and looked again. The kitten wasn't grey.



"Did you lose your coat in the storm my dear?" asked one kindly cat. "We will help you look for it."

The cats searched up and down and down and up but no coat of grey could be found. The cats were puzzled.

"What happened to your fur?" shrieked the eldest ginger cat when she saw the kitten lying next to her. "Why are you so grey?"

The other cats crowded around and looked in amazement.

"He's so dirty!" a naughty kitten remarked. All the cats began licking the kitten with their sandpaper tongues. They licked and licked and licked until his coat was bright and shiny. But it remained grey. The cats were confused.

After a while the eldest cat stepped forward.

"This animal is not one of us!" she declared with a frown on her face.

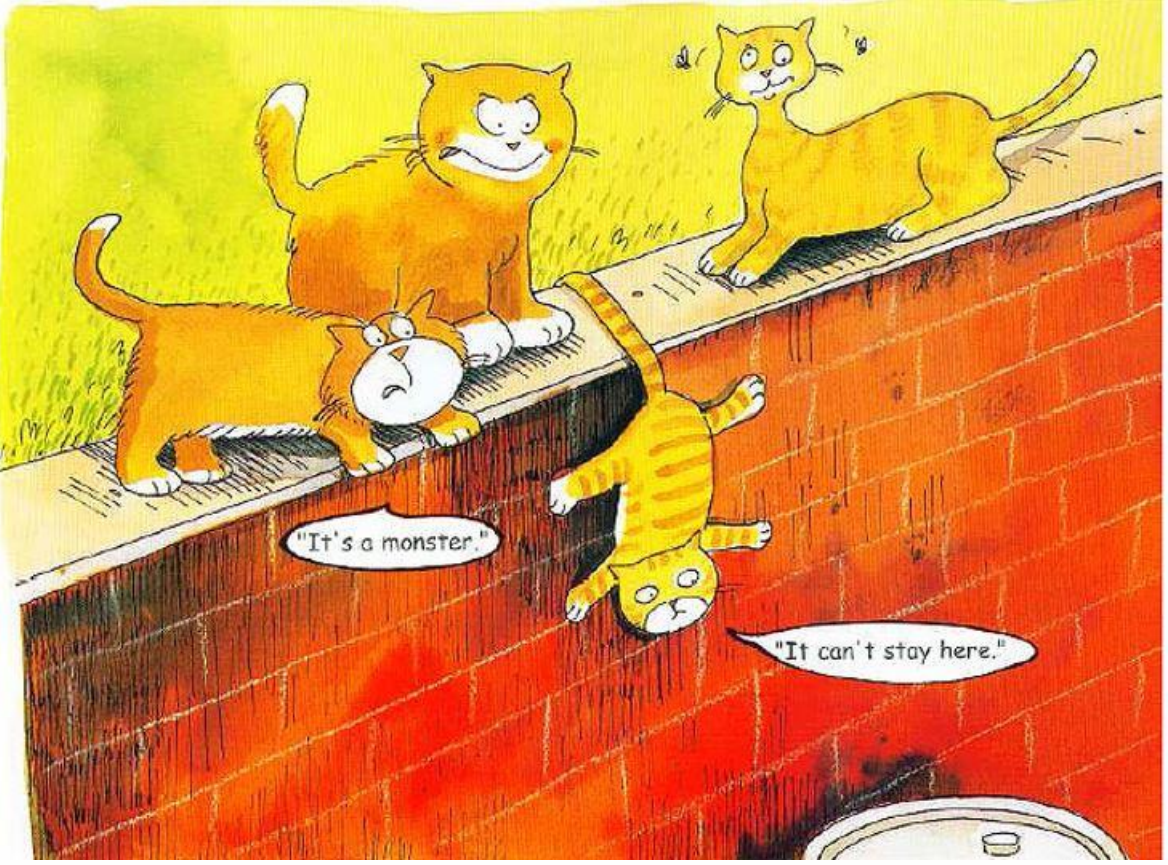
"Nat one of us " echoed the others.

"It comes from the other side."

"FROM THE OTHER SIDE!" yelled the cats, jumping back in alarm.

"B-b-but those e-creatures... f-f-from the other s-s-side. T-t-they are

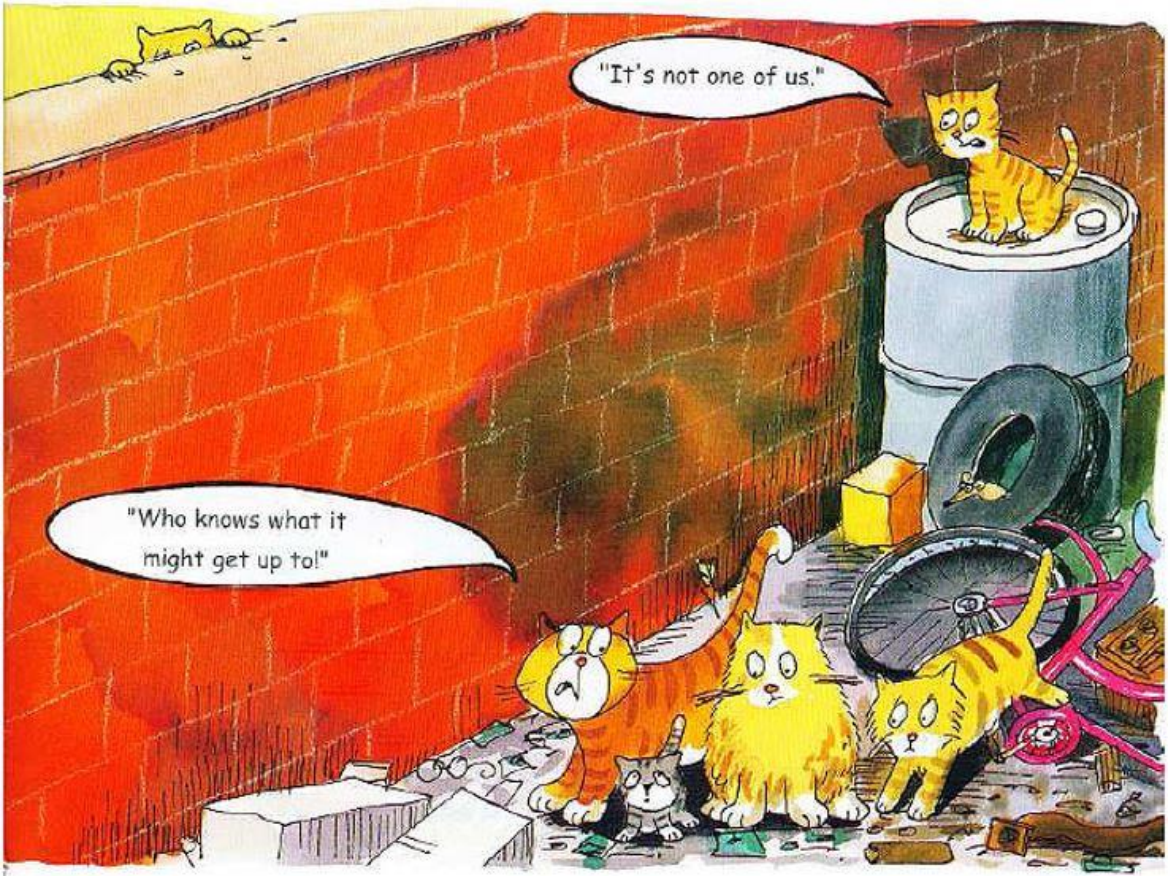
m-m-monsters!" stuttered one cat from behind the wait.



"They eat anything that moves!" said a very fat cat.

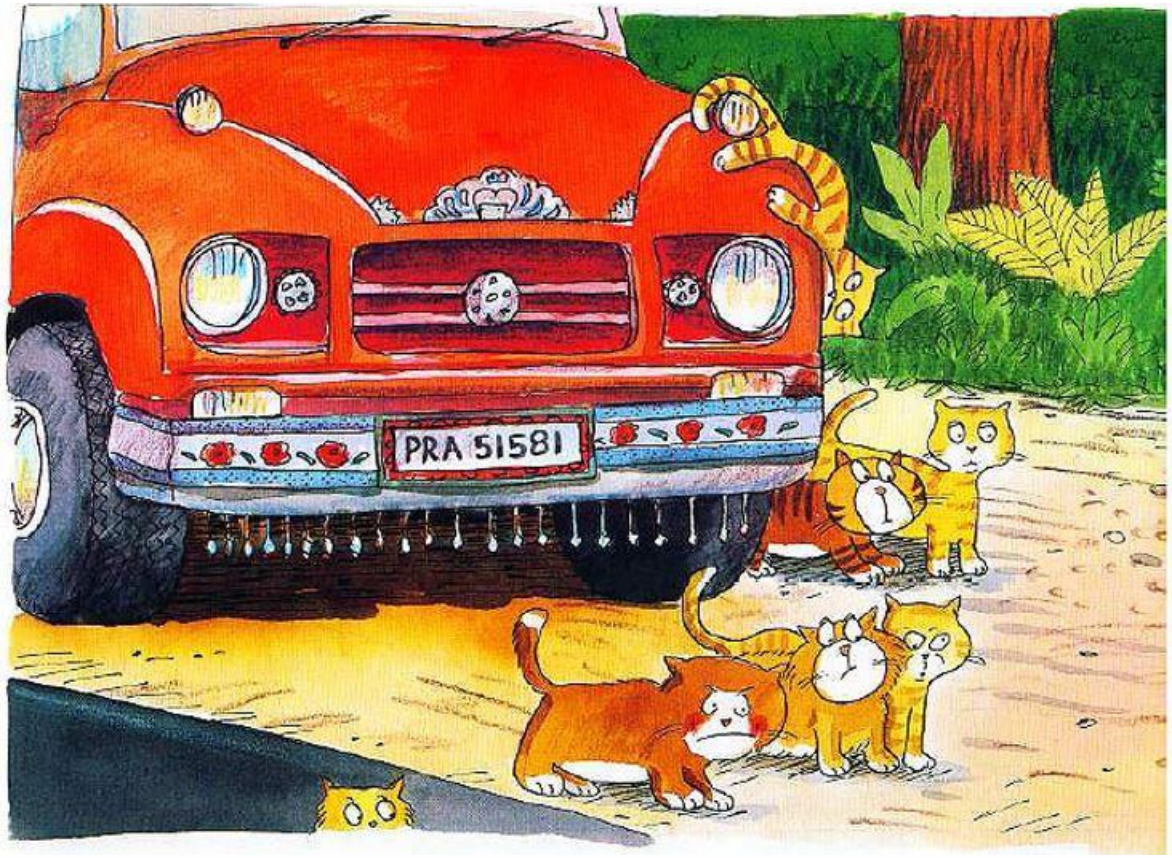
"And they are dirty and smelt really awful!" added another, wrinkling up her nose.

The cats looked again at the grey kitten that sat wide-eyed before them.



They all agreed.

The grey kitten was sent away.



Small and alone, the kitten crept off towards the park.

He looked back at the cats sneering and snarling at him and was scared.

At long lost, the kitten found his way home.

"Where have you been?" asked his father, "we've been so worried!"

"The storm blew me to the other side."

"B-b-but m-monsters live on t-t-the other s-s-side," stuttered one kitten

from behind the tree trunk.

“Stinky, dirty monsters," added another. "The worst you have ever seen."

"It must have been terrible," said a motherly cat. "What did they do to you?"

"Nothing at first. But when they realised I was different to them, they became nasty. They called me a monster and sent me away. I was so frightened!"

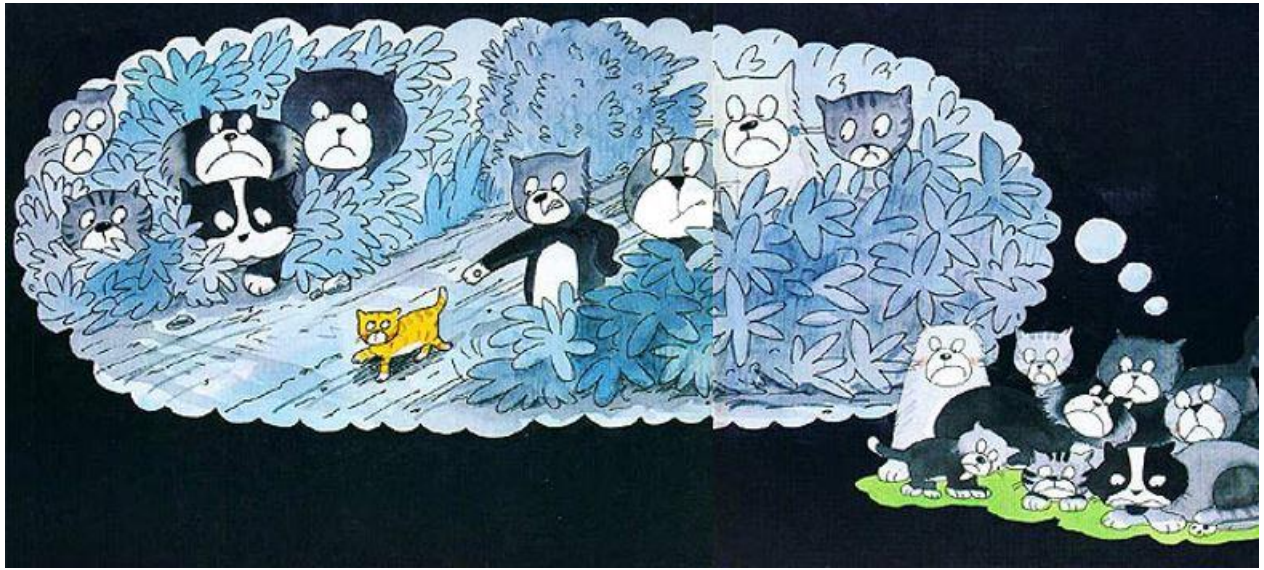
"You, a monster? How ridiculous!" said the kitten's mother. "How could they have been so horrible to a little kitten like you?"

But as soon as she had spoken the words, she remembered.

"I think we have made a terrible mistake," she said. But she didn't need to explain. All the cats were looking down at their paws in shame. They remembered the morning when they had found the ginger kitten and had called it all sorts of names. They too had sent it away.

"We called that kitten a monster just because she was different to us."

"When I woke after being rescued from the storm, I was shocked to see such strange coloured creatures," said the kitten. "But then I realised that they were cats like us, only a different colour. There was a fat one just like Chota, and a kind cat like Aunty. One even had a tail just like mine! Perhaps if we went to the other side, you could see for yourself."

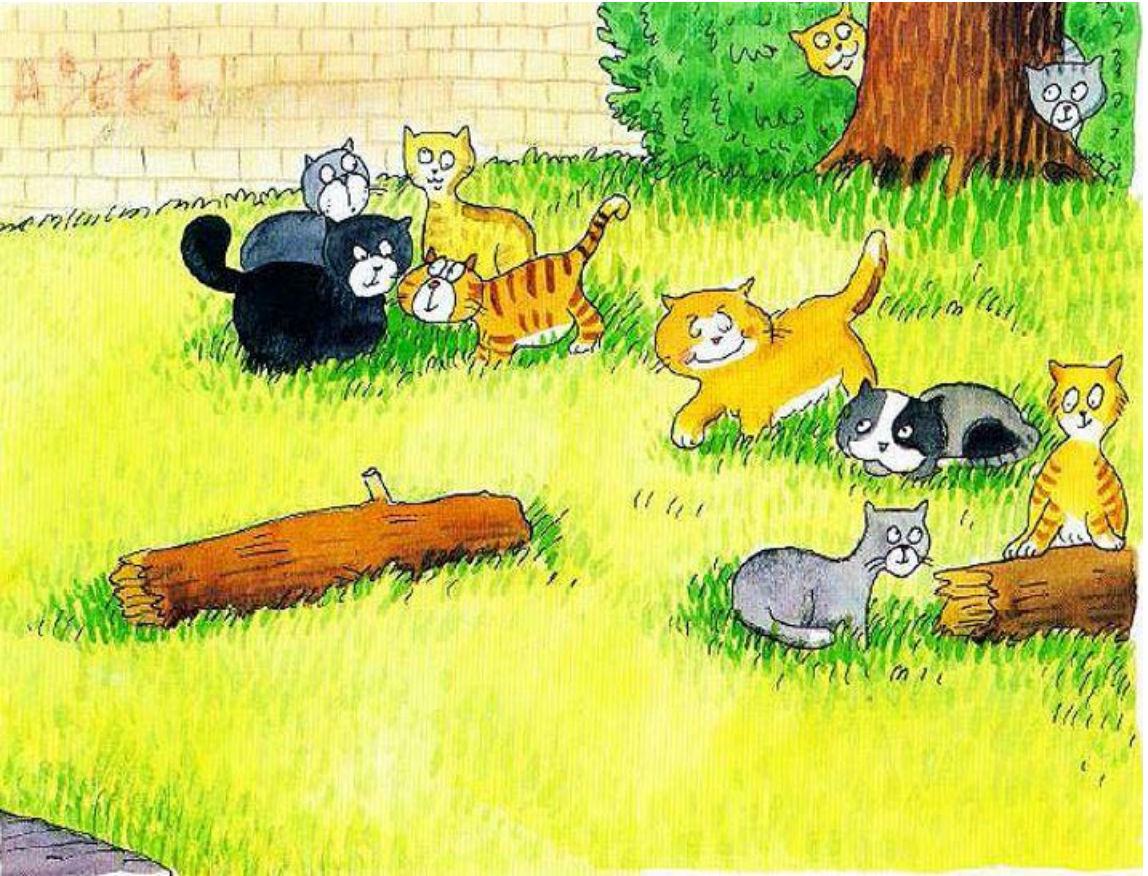


And so it was decided. The cats set off, with the kitten leading the way.

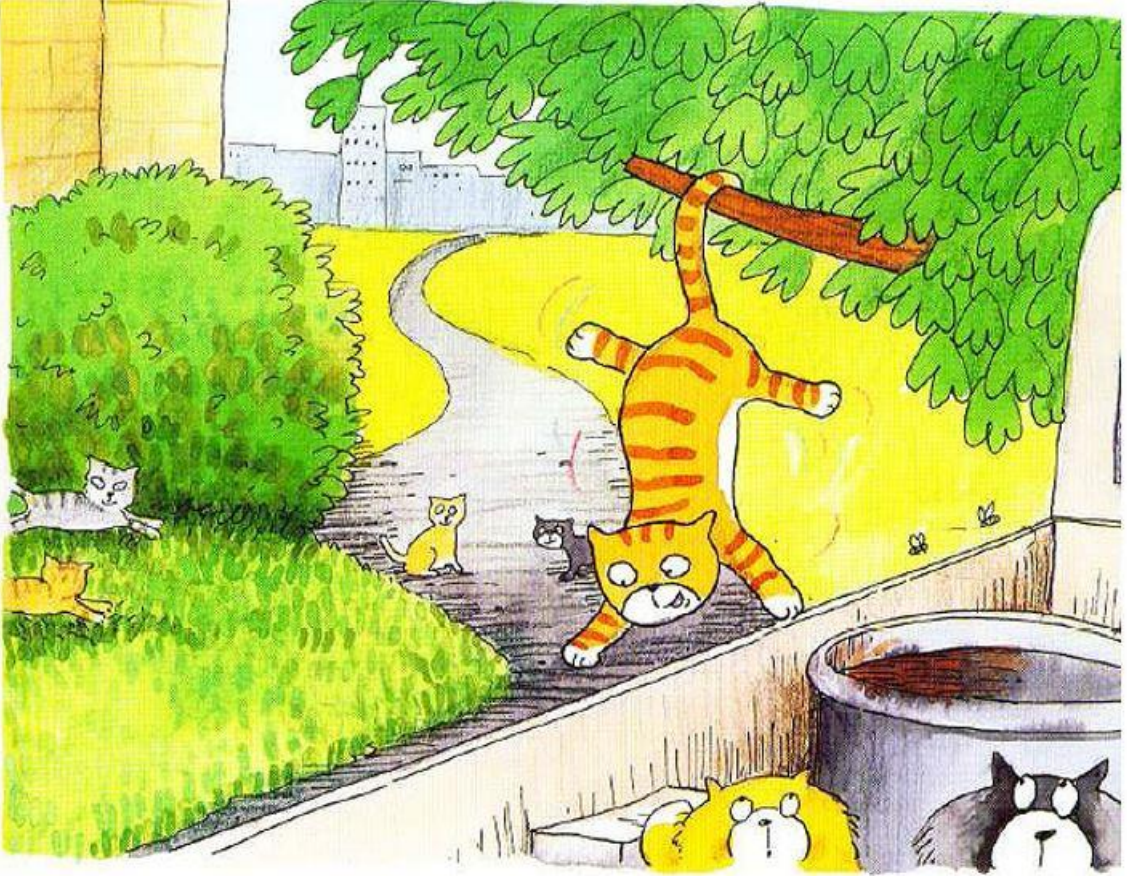
Bat when they reached the middle of the park...

twitched, and their tails swished from side to side.

Paw by paw they moved forward, fascinated by what they saw.



The two groups of cats looked at each other, then looked some more. Their noses itched, their ears



These were not monsters, but cats, just like them.

Well ... almost!